

FACULTY OF MUSIC UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

Contemporary Music Ensemble

ROBIN ENGELMAN,
Conductor

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TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 1990

8:00 PM

WALTER HALL

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PROGRAM

Étude pour Clarinette Seule (1962)

Colleen Cook, clarinet

Bruce Mather

In Ancient Temple Gardens (1976)

William Cahn

Lori Gemmell, harp; Steven Wassmansdorf, percussion;
Jennifer Hellen, flute; Pippa Williams, oboe;
Colleen Cook, clarinet; Catherine MacDonnell, bassoon;
Janetta Ilczewska and Krista Buckland, violins; Ananya Menon, viola;
Greg Hubert, cello; Robert Clutton, double bass

Requiems for the Party Girl (1966)

R. Murray Schafer

Shelagh Tyreman, mezzo soprano

Martina Kurth, flute; Leslie Duff, piccolo;
Colleen Cook, clarinet and bass clarinet; Katherine Robertson, horn;
Janetta Ilczewska, violin; Ananya Menon, viola;
Greg Hubert, cello; Elizabeth Ely, harp;
Stephen Clarke, piano; Gabor Taryan and Steven Wassmansdorf, percussion

* * * Intermission * * *

Suite for Bassoon, String Quartet and Percussion (1977)

Keith Bissell

Catherine MacDonnell, bassoon

Janetta Ilczewska and Krista Buckland, violins; Ananya Menon, viola;
Greg Hubert, cello; Gabor Taryan, Steven Wassmansdorf and Morris Palter, percussion

In C (1964)

Terry Riley

Leslie Duff, piccolo; Jennifer Hellen and Martina Kurth, flutes;
Pippa Williams, oboe; Colleen Cook, clarinet;
Catherine MacDonnell, bassoon; Katherine Robertson, horn;
Norman Engel and Tim Birch, trumpets; Robert Tilley, trombone;
Janetta Ilczewska and Krista Buckland, violins; Ananya Menon, viola;
Greg Hubert, cello; Robert Clutton, double bass;
Stephen Clarke, piano; Morris Palter, Gabor Taryan, and Steven Wassmansdorf, percussion

PROGRAM NOTES

Étude pour Clarinett Seule (1962)

Bruce Mather

Bruce Mather was born in Toronto in 1939 and studied at the Royal Conservatory and the University of Toronto from which he obtained a baccalaureate in music in 1959. His teachers were Alberto Guerrero, Earle Moss and Alexandre Uninsky for piano; Godfrey Ridout, Oskar Morawetz and John Weinzwieg for composition. From 1959 to 1962, he studied at the Paris Conservatory with Simone Plé-Caussade (counterpoint and fugue), Darius Milhaud (composition), and Olivier Messiaen (analysis). He obtained a Masters degree from Stanford University in 1963 and a doctorate from the University of Toronto in 1967. Since 1966, he has taught advanced analysis, harmony, and composition at McGill University and is the conductor of the McGill Contemporary Music Ensemble.

Bruce Mather is a distinguished interpreter of contemporary music and as a pianist, has made recordings for Nonesuch, Radio-Canada International, McGill University Records, and Centerdiscs. He performs and records music for two pianos with his wife Pierrette Le Page.

His numerous compositions have gained international recognition and he has been commissioned by the Chamber Orchestra of Rouen, the Ensemble 2E2M (France), the Metz Festival, Radio France, the Montreal Symphony, New Music Concerts (Toronto), Trio Basso (Cologne), the Esprit Orchestra, Nexus, the National Arts Centre Orchestra, and the Stratford Festival. His composition *Musique pour Champigny* (1976) won the Jules Léger Prize.

Beginning in 1977 with Clos de Vougeot, written for Nexus, he began writing works inspired by and named after great wines. These works include *Ausone* (1979) written for Robert Aitken, *Gattinara* (1982) for Rivka Golani and Robin Engelman, *Clos d'Audignac* (1985) for Robert Becker and Nexus, and *Vouvray* (1986) for Lawrence Cherney and Erica Goodman. In recognition of his knowledge of wines and music, Bruce was inducted into the world famous Burgundian wine fraternity, the Confrérie des Chevaliers du Tastevin, during a ceremony held at the Chateau Clos de Vougeot in June of 1987.

The *Étude pour Clarinette Seule* is dedicated to his brother, Bill.

-- Note by Robin Engelman

In Ancient Temple Gardens (1976)

William Cahn

This piece was composed after returning from Nexus' tour of Japan in 1976. It is dedicated to Toru Takemitsu who was the group's host and mentor during our stay in Japan. Among the most memorable of our experiences were visits to the beautiful temples of Kyoto, of which three in particular made a special impression and provided the inspiration for this work. The first is Kiyomizu, which sits on a wooded hill overlooking the city and where we spent a wonderful afternoon with Toru. The second is Ryoanji with its profound rock garden, and the third is

Saiho-Zenji, or Kokedera, the serene moss garden in the hills just outside of Kyoto. The music attempts to capture a feeling of peace, beauty, and harmony, that surely must accompany anyone's presence at these special places.

-- W.C.

Requiems for the Party Girl (1966)

R. Murray Schafer

Requiems for the Party Girl collects together in concert version the arias of the heroine, Ariadne, of my stage work *Patria II*. Although these arias were written in 1966 on a commission from the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, the complete stage work was first given at The Stratford (Ontario) Festival in 1972.

Ariadne is a gay-tragic girl. She is the prototype of those strange harlequinesque creatures one meets occasionally at parties, beneath whose furious demonstrations of gregariousness and *joie de vivre* one detects obscured signs of terror and alienation. As the gossiping voices around her whisper their absurd propositions in her ear, there is laughter in her eyes to disguise the anguish in her heart.

A complete text of the arias, which come at different points in the drama, is as follows:

Oh sing my requiem, for I am about to commit suicide.

Voices gossiping in other rooms.

But no one listens.

Mursing murvoice vocat con ingmur secon...

Outstretched hands are rare.

Allein alone âme soul seele moon mond lune allein -- seul.

Mursing convocati of spring sippin...

Everywhere I go I leave a part of myself. I am afraid that soon there will be nothing left of me.

Whenever I go out I leave a paper on my desk for visitors to sign....

No one signs, though people are coming and going...and seldom silently.

Gossipolation of voices spingossip...Really?

"Are you Eenglinch?" he said unpremeditatively; and he leaned forward expanding his head as he did so.

The confused and whirling joy of life fades before fear of death.

As past grows, future diminishes. I move from absolute to absolute.

There are those who speak of their last attempted suicide as if it were a holiday in Florida. They know nothing of death.

The voices of the world become fainter and (mursing convocati secon) fewer.

It happened so quickly then. Suddenly I had a gun; I opened fire.
The bullet lodged in my right temple. I fell to the floor immediately.
My head rolled over and was resting in blood on the floor.
Drunk with alcohol and terror I had begun to laugh -- in death.

On my door I had written: "Come in, I have killed myself." I had written "I". But there is no longer any "I".

Requiem. Requiem. Requiem. Requiem.

Suite for Bassoon, String Quartet and Percussion

Keith Bissell

"Keith Bissell was born on February 12, 1912, in Meaford, Ontario. In 1942, while teaching school in Toronto, he received a Bachelor of Music degree from the University of Toronto, where his principal teacher was Leo Smith. In 1948, Bissell was appointed Supervisor of Music for Edmonton Schools. During his tenure, he was organist at Christ Church, founded the Edmonton Teachers' Chorus, and formed the Edmonton Junior Symphony Orchestra. Returning to the Toronto area, he served during 1955-1976 as Co-ordinator of Music for the Scarborough Board of Education. In 1963, he helped organize, with the late John Adaskin of the Canadian Music Centre, the first Canadian composers' seminar in music education. After a period of study in 1960 in Munich with Gunild Keetman and Carl Orff, Bissell introduced into the Scarborough schools the Orff method of elementary music education.

Folk materials have influenced many of Bissell's works, from *Six Folk Songs from Eastern Canada* (a CBC commission, first performed in 1971 by Maureen Forrester) to the *Variations on a Canadian Folk Song* for string orchestra (commissioned and performed by the Toronto Chamber Players). This marks him as a "traditionalist", a designation he readily accepts. Even his titles (*Three Songs in Praise of Spring*, *Under the Apple Boughs*, *A Bluebird in March*) are resolutely nature-oriented in an era when musical titles are increasingly abstract or technological. Generally, Bissell's style is only mildly dissonant and still holds quite firmly to diatonic harmony."

In C

Terry Riley

"Riley, who was born in California in 1935, studied formal composition at the University of California at Berkeley. At the time, while he was working as a ragtime jazz pianist, he fell under the spell of jazz visionary John Coltrane and also began exploring the inner workings of tuning systems with music's first minimalist, LaMonte Young.

With *In C*, a free-form but precise succession of 53 simple phrases in and around C Major (set to a riveting, unwavering pulse), Riley combined all of his seemingly incompatible musical activities into an elegant, single-minded concept. It revolutionized music. This 1964 work's radiant, non-nostalgic tonality provided a sense of

renewal for the grey atonalists. Its freedom of movement and unrestricted instrumentation helped the performers develop the sense of musical community generally associated with jazz. It demonstrated the concept that simple melodic phrases could be used to produce fascinating, ever-changing textural patterns of considerable richness. Its consciousness-expanding flavor reflected and appealed to the culture of the '60's, rather than defying this broader audience, as the more calculated avant-garde scores of the day had done.

But if *In C* set the stage for minimalism, which has now developed into one of the most popular classical music styles of the century, Riley himself never developed into a true classical minimalist. He never abstractly explored the effects of phase pattern and repetition the way Philip Glass and Steve Reich did. Instead, Riley followed more personal inclinations such as: improvising on keyboards, making recordings in which he overdubbed all reed and keyboard parts and performing live with tape delay systems. More importantly, in the late '60's he went to India and immersed himself in the traditions of North Indian vocal music, a music he has studied rigorously ever since."

The evening's performance is being recorded by CJRT.FM for future broadcast.



